Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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S E C R E T CAIRO 3193

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG, JO
SUBJ: JORDANIAN AMB'S COMMENTS RE ME PEACE PROCESS

1. NEW JORDANIAN AMB, DHUQAN AL-HINDAWI, PAID COURTESY CALL ON ME TODAY. SEVERAL OF HIS COMMENTS WERE OF INTEREST.

2. SPEAKING OF EGYPTIAN/JORDANIAN RELATIONS, HE DESCRIBED THEM AS "VERY STRAINED" IN PAST BUT NOW "VERY CORDIAL." HE HAS BEEN GIVEN READY ACCESS TO SENIOR EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS. I SAID WAS GLAD TO HEAR THIS AND SUGGESTED PRES SADAT'S RECENT PUBLIC INSISTENCE THAT THERE SHOULD BE A DECLARED, FORMAL LINK BETWEEN ANY PALESTINIAN STATE AND JORDAN MUST BE GRATIFYING TO GOJ. HINDAWI AGREED THIS WAS SO, BUT EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THIS MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS AN EFFORT TO PUT GOJ OUT FRONT IN NEGOTIATING WEST BANK ARRANGEMENTS. WHILE GOJ IS WILLING ATTEND GENEVA AS A CONFRONTATION STATE, KING HUSSEIN'S POSITION CONTINUES TO BE THAT PLO MUST ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEGOTIATING ANY WEST BANK ARRANGEMENTS. MOREOVER, JORDANIAN POSITION ON PALESTINIAN STATE LINKAGE WITH JORDAN IS THAT THE PLO LEADERSHIP MUST FIRST PUBLICLY DECLARE THIS IS ITS DESIRE. JORDAN WILL NOT BE THE FIRST TO DO SO. JORDANIAN ROYAL COURT COUNSELOR ABDUL HAMID SHARRAF, WHEN MEETING WITH SADAT EARLY LAST WEEK, HAD MADE THIS

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VERY CLEAR TO THE EGYPTIANS.

3. HINDAWI VOLUNTEERED THAT SADAT HAD ALSO RECONTED RECENT TALK WITH ARAFAT, IN WHICH THE LATTER HAD INDICATED THAT IF THE PROBLEM OF DIRECT PLO PARTICIPATION IN GENEVA PERSISTS, THE UN,THE ARAB LEAGUE OR GENERAL GAMASY MIGHT BE ASKED TO REPRESENT PLO. SADAT HAS ADDED THAT STRONG JORDANIAN MILITARY

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DELEGATION MIGHT IN THAT EVENT ASSIST GAMASY. SHARRAF HAD TOLD SADAT GOJ DOES NOT REGARD THIS AS ADEQUATE. HERE AGAIN, THE PLO LEADERSHIP MUST IN THE FIRST INSTANCE ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAKING WHATEVER WEST BANK CONCESSIONS ARE REQUIRED. THEREAFTER, IF IT COMES TO NEGOTIATING "TECHNICAL DETAILS," GAMASY, SUPPORTED BY AN ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION (HE MENTIONED EGYPTIAN CHIEF OF STAFF LTGEN MOHAMED ALI FAHMY), MIGHT BE USED. IMPORTNAT THING, HINDAWI REPEATEDLY STRESSDED, IS THAT PLO BE OUT IN FRONT.

4. HINDAWI MADE USUAL OBSERVATION THAT THE TIME HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER FOR AN ME PEACE SETTLEMENT. ADVERTING TO HIS PREVIOUS POSITION AS MIN OF EDUCATION, HE CLAIMED HE HAD LONG ACTED FOR GOJ AS LIAISION WITH PLO LEADERSHIP. PLO LEADER-SHIP, HE NOTED, REMAINS DEEPLY DIVIDED. WHILE ARAFAT, FARUQ KADDUMI AND KHALID FAHUM ARE "MODERATES", RADICAL ELEMENTS IN PLO LEADERSHIP REMAIN STRONG. GIVEN CURRENT INTERNAL DISARRAY WITHIN PLO, HINDAWI DOUBTED THAT UPCOMING PNC WILL DO ANYTHING ABOUT AMENDING THE NATIONAL COVENANT. PERHAPS, HOWEVER, IF EGYPTIANS COULD INDUCE PLO TO ACCEPT RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 238, THIS WOULD ALREADY BE IMPLICIT ACCEPTANCE OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST. IF THIS WERE ACCOMPANIED BY SOME UN OR ISRAELI STATEMENT ENDORSING THE LEGITIMATE "RIGHTS" OF THE PALESTINIANS, PERHAPS THE REPRESENTATION DEADLOCK MIGHT BE BROKEN. HINDAWI DOUBTED, HOWEVER, WHETHER ISRAEL WOULD BE WILLING ACCEPT PLO UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.
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